Teacher Registration Fees – Q&A

How many people does this affect?

The Teaching Council represents approximately 105,000 registered teachers, including early childhood, primary and secondary school teachers.

In some cases Early Childhood Education services cover this cost on behalf of employees.

How much are teacher registration fees currently?

National's policy will scrap the $157 annual fee teachers are expected to pay from February 2021 to keep their registration certificates up to date.

The Teaching Council currently charges teachers $220.80 every three years (equivalent to $73.60 a year) to register. The fee was last increased in 2010.

The Teaching Council has decided to significantly increase its registration fees from February 2021:

- Changing to a yearly registration system
- Increasing the annual fee to $157 (more than double the previous fee)

How does this differ from the Government's policy?

The Labour-led Government supports the ongoing ability of the Teaching Council to charge teachers an increased annual fee for their registration.

The Minister of Education provided stop-gap funding of $16.5 million in the 2020 Budget to transition teachers from three-year to one-year renewals.

This transitional assistance simply pushes the problem out. The Teaching Council continues to project a significant increase in the fees it will charge, with these rising to $157 annually from February 2021 – up from the current $73.60 equivalent annual fee.

How much will this policy cost?

We estimate this policy will cost approximately $16 million per year.

Does National have the power to scrap the fee?

This change will require a law change to the Education Act, removing the power of the Teaching Council to charge teachers for registration fees and other costs relating to its functions. Currently the Teaching Council does not require Ministerial approval in order to prescribe fees. There may be very limited exemptions to allow the Council to charge late fees, or to cover the additional cost of processing registrations for overseas applicants, for example.

How will the Teaching Council remain independent?

This funding will not change the Council's role as an independent statutory entity. The Council will continue to hold the functions and powers set out in statute with the exception of the removal of some of its powers to charge certification fees. The Council will still have the strategic independence to set its own work programme (informed by engagement and dialogue with the sector and the parameters given by law), in the interests of teachers and learners.